

JW 625
HR, #0

7/12/71

Confidential- Sirhan developments

Charach was in Washington the end of last week, held a press conference that was given fair space (in a snipe story by George Lardner) in the Washington Post, with whom I discussed this afterward, by phone. I know him. (He may be assigned to the New Orleans story instead of Clawson, which would be unfortunate, for while both are competent, Clawson is objective and Lardner is not, and the chances of a good reporter coming up with something are thereby diminished.)

I have seen only the rewritten and abbreviated story on the LA DA's announcement that the evidence had been damaged. I have not seen any other reporting. If anyone has a full account, as I presume appeared in the LA papers, I'd welcome it, for on reflection I do not regard it as likely to be a belated concession of irregularities by the authorities as the foundation for what can be a major assault on critics. Of this and other assassinations.

Charach and Blehr make clear that they have had access to some of the evidence. If what he told Lardner is true and Lardner represented it accurately to me, Charach takes credit for Blehr's work.

Now I know beyond question, as you may learn soon, that the sanctity of all of this evidence was a matter of official concern rather exceptionally reflected. The items now mentioned as damaged are specifically mentioned in the official consideration to which I refer. Special security provisions were to have been made.

All of this evidence was in official hands. There are but two ways in which access could have been obtained: officially, through officials discharging their duties, or clandestinely. The latter would be possible with the collaboration of an official only. I do not believe there is an official of any rank in LA who would have, on his own, have let Charach have anything. There were only a very small number of officials who could have had access, so one of this small number had to have made it possible for another to do this, probably make it appear that his was an act of principle, etc. A black figk cop is the most likely. From my limited contact with Charach, I think he'd take such a thing, hook, line and sinker. If it happened this way, gird yourselves.

A reporter was here Saturday when there was announcement of the DA's announcement on the radio. I backgrounded him, as I had Lardner the day before. And today I undertook other initiatives on which, in time, I will report. Perhaps this can be forestalled or better. Only time will tell, but it will take luck. I have everything else needed in my possession and, fortunately, back in about February I backgrounded one who may be the right person. That was long before any of this recent stuff.

On another subject, I have a set of xeroxes of the DJ Washington copies of the N.O. affidavits. I've not had time to read them. I have skimmed them. None of this set is signed, not has any of the blanks left in typing filled in, and they come from carbon copies, not the originals. I think it would be wise to assume that there is and will be much more than this, but this is rather weak on the essential issue of Garrison's knowledge of, understanding of the fact that he was getting a payoff. It has other apparent deficiencies. It would be better to wait until I read everything at least in haste before going further in this direction. I hope to get copies of the stories I do not have from Lesar. I have had a few sent from two sources, a friend in NYU who still gets the papers and an old and fruitful source in N.O. They are far from complete. The more I see, the more I think about this, the more certain I am that it is bigger than just getting Garrison, which I think will not happen unless he goes off his rocker entirely. Or, unless there is much, much more than I've seen, which is not impossible. The stuff that is made to look bad is typical of two things: JG and Louisiana pols and politics. I think the government has made serious mistakes, that they knew they were mistakes and decided the benefits expected warranted it, that the Partin thing may not be unrelated (a real smear on the Demos and Kennedys if it comes off).

HW

Loned Bleber file
see Page 2